

Laboratory measurements of mineral dust scattering phase function and linear polarization

Robert A. West

Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena

Lyn R. Doose, Andrew M. Eibl, and Martin G. Tomasko

Lunar and Planetary Laboratory, University of Arizona, Tucson

Michael I. Mishchenko

Institute of Terrestrial and Planetary Atmospheres/State University of New York at Stony Brook
NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, New York

Abstract. With the goal of improving our understanding of how small mineral dust particles scatter light at visible and near-infrared wavelengths, we measured the scattering phase function and linear polarization of small mineral dust particles over the scattering angle range 15° – 170° at three wavelengths (0.47, 0.652, and $0.937\ \mu\text{m}$). Particle samples were obtained from Duke Scientific Corp., and include aluminum oxide, silicon carbide, aluminum silicate, antimony oxide, calcium carbonate, and cerium oxide. Particle equivalent-sphere radii range from a few tenths of a micron to about $10\ \mu\text{m}$. The particles were injected into a laboratory chamber, where they scattered light as they fell through the air. They were collected on a scanning electron micrograph (SEM) substrate. Particle shapes and sizes were then measured from the SEM images. We compare measured phase functions with those calculated for spheroids with a distribution of axial ratios and sizes, random orientation, and refractive index $1.53 + 0.008i$ [Mishchenko *et al.*, this issue]. Two of the samples (one of which has a refractive index close to that used in theoretical computations) produced scattering phase functions that were quite similar to those for spheroids. Two samples produced phase functions whose variation between 15° and 170° was much less than that for the spheroids or for the other samples. We suspect this difference may be due to the very high refractive index of those particles, although differences in particle microstructure may also be important. Two samples produced positive linear polarization which had a single broad maximum near 100° scattering angle, and a magnitude greater than 40% at some wavelengths. Two samples had generally positive linear polarization but a more complicated structure, and two samples produced mostly negative polarization whose amplitude was small. We do not have numerical results for the appropriate refractive index and size parameter with which to compare the polarization measurements. We hope the questions raised by this work will stimulate additional effort to develop and test numerical codes for scattering by nonspherical particles.

Introduction

Our understanding of Earth's atmosphere and surface has come to rely increasingly on remotely sensed measurements made by orbiting satellites. This trend is accelerating with the development of new programs such as the Earth Observing System (EOS) and the Japanese Advanced Earth Observing Satellite (ADEOS). Among the suite of scientific instruments to be included on these satellites are several designed to measure the distribution and optical properties of aerosol particles. Aerosol studies are among the most important scientific objectives of the multiangle imaging spectroradiometer (MISR) [Diner *et al.*, 1991] and the moderate-resolution imaging spectrometer (MODIS) [King *et al.*, 1992] scheduled to launch in 1998 on the first EOS platform. These instruments will infer

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aerosol loading from measurements of the angular (MISR) and spectral (MODIS and MISR) distributions of scattered sunlight. Instruments on other platforms (the Earth Observing Scanning Polarimeter [Travis, 1992] and the Polarization and Directionality of the Earth's Reflectances [Deschamps *et al.*, 1994]) make use of linear polarization measurements of scattered sunlight as a probe of particle properties.

A scattering model must be employed in order to derive particle properties (size and composition) and optical depth from intensity and polarization measurements. Scattering models start with the scattering properties of particles (scattering and absorption cross sections, the angular distribution of scattered intensity, and the angular distribution, magnitude, and direction of the polarization of the scattered light). Scattering properties of spherical liquid drops can be readily calculated from the Mie theory. Spherical symmetry, upon which Mie theory is based, does not hold for the population of nonspherical mineral dust particles, which constitute a major frac-

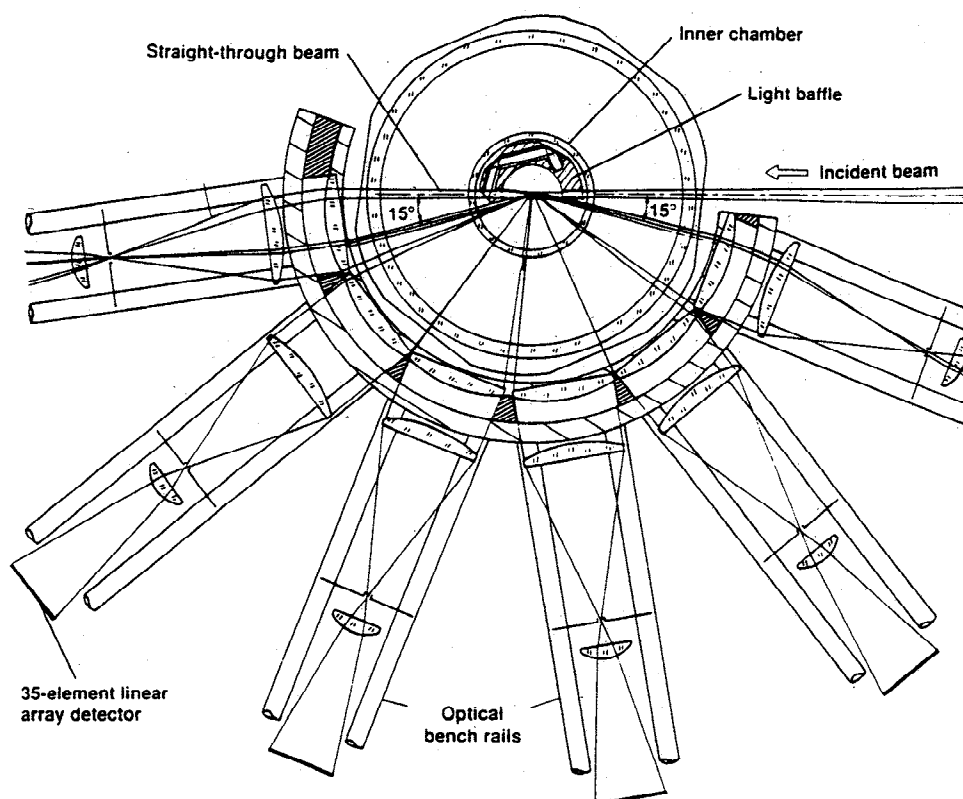


Figure 1. Schematic view [from Pope *et al.*, 1992] of the optical layout to measure scattered light from mineral dust particles and latex spheres. The light source and filter wheel are off the diagram to the right. Not shown is a separate chamber which holds the mineral dust particles until they are swept into the inner chamber through a connecting tube by a pulse of dry nitrogen gas.

tion of the aerosols over and downwind of desert regions. Mineral dust aerosol source strength (Mt yr^{-1}) is thought to be several times that for sulfate aerosol [Tegen and Fung, 1995]. Significant mineral dust optical depths occur over oceans off the coasts of Africa, China, and Japan [Nakajima *et al.*, 1989; Husar *et al.*, this issue]. Mishchenko *et al.* [1995] recently discussed the kinds of errors that can be made in aerosol retrieval algorithms if Mie theory is used for nonspherical particles. Kahn *et al.* [this issue] showed how MISR measurements can distinguish between spheres and nonspheres, provided that we know the scattering phase functions of nonspherical particles.

We need a numerical method or empirical data to calculate the optical properties of nonspherical particles whose equivalent-sphere radius is in the range from a few tenths of a micron to a few tens of microns, at the wavelengths (visible and near infrared) relevant to the measurement set. The problem is complicated by the need to accommodate a wide variety of shapes, from distorted or roughened spheres to simple faceted crystals to highly complex aggregate structures with voids and heterogeneous inclusions [Cheng, 1980; Woods, 1980]. The discrete dipole array method [Draine and Flatau, 1994; West, 1991; Lumme and Rahola, 1994] can accommodate such a range of shapes, but calculations for particles whose effective radius is larger than the wavelength are impractical.

The *T*-matrix method is another numerical approach which can accommodate particle sizes larger than the wavelength. The method was used by Wiscombe and Mugnai [1986, 1988], who computed scattering by particles whose surfaces are described by Chebyshev polynomials. Although such particles are

not found in nature, the large variety of shapes in their study allowed them to draw some general conclusions about the differences between scattering by spheres and nonspheres. Scattering by spherical particles reaches a deep minimum near 130° scattering angle. The minimum is not nearly as deep for nonspheres of comparable size parameter. At forward-scattering angles where diffraction dominates, the differences between spheres and equal-area nonspheres are minor. Improvements to the *T*-matrix method have been made by Mishchenko [1991, 1993] and Mishchenko and Travis [1994a]. Hill *et al.* [1984] and Mishchenko *et al.* [this issue] argue that *T*-matrix

Table 1. Filter Characteristics and Refractive Indices of Two Particle Types

Filter	Effective Wavelength, μm	Band-pass, μm	Refractive Index	
			Aluminum Oxide	Silicon Carbide
Blue	0.470	0.062	$1.55 + i1.53(-2)$	$2.7 + i1.6(-5)$
Red	0.652	0.039	$1.56 + i1.32(-2)$	$2.6 + i5(-5)$
Infrared	0.937	0.063	$1.56 + i9.54(-3)$	$2.6 + i1(-4)$

Effective wavelength and bandpass were taken from Pope *et al.* [1992]. Complex refractive index values were interpolated from tables published by Koike *et al.* [1995] (for aluminum oxide) and by Choyke and Palik [1985] (for silicon carbide). The notation $n + ib(-c)$ in the columns for the refractive index give the imaginary part as $k = b \times 10^{-c}$. The number of significant figures in these columns reflects the precision of the interpolation.

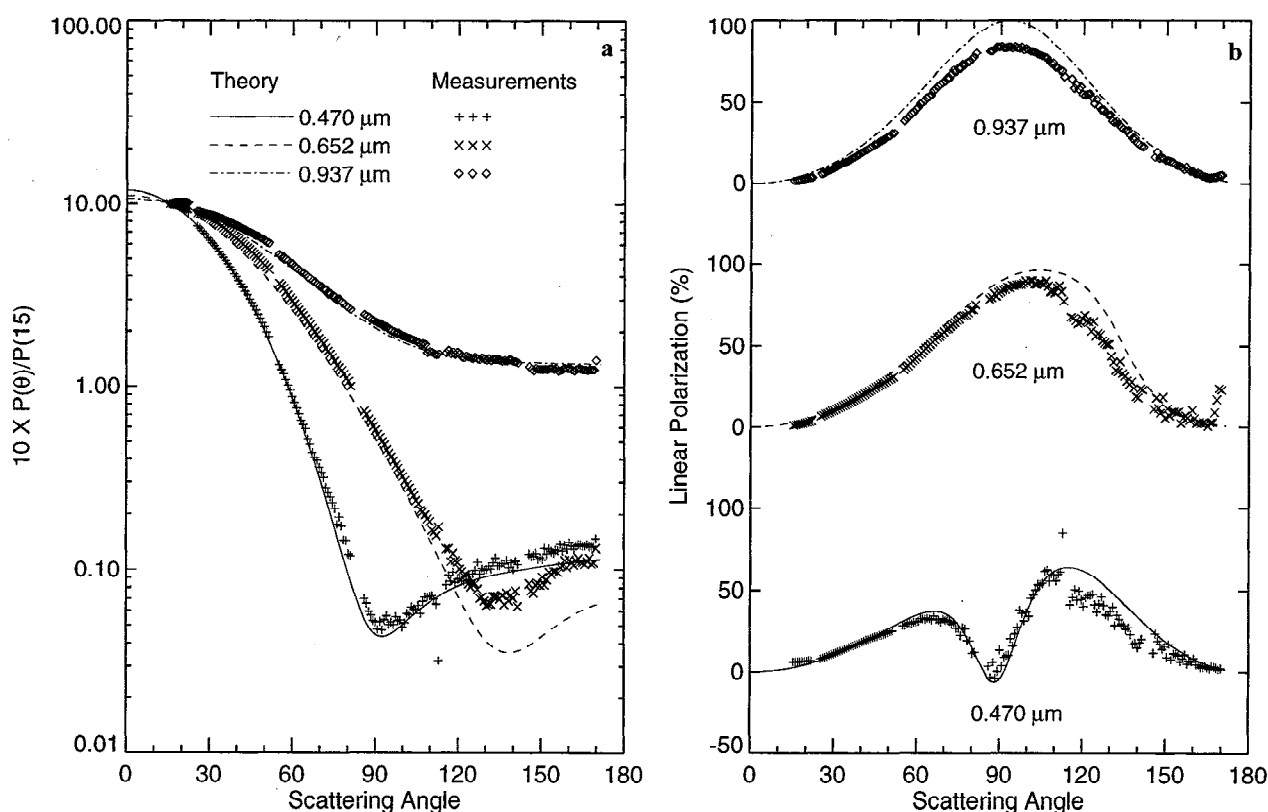


Figure 2. Measurements and Mie theory calculations for spheres with radius $0.16 \mu\text{m}$ at three wavelengths. Shown are (a) the phase function, relative to its value at scattering angle 15° , and (b) linear polarization. The Mie phase curve for $0.937 \mu\text{m}$ is almost hidden by the measurement symbols for the same wavelength. In these and subsequent figures, $P(\theta)$ is the phase function of the particle at scattering angle θ . The linear polarization is expressed in percent, and is positive if the electric vector is in the direction perpendicular to the scattering plane.

calculations for randomly oriented spheroids, with a distribution of both axial ratios and size parameter, can form the basis for a retrieval algorithm for nonspherical particles.

A small number of published laboratory measurements are available to test theory and to guide our approach. Microwave measurements [Zerull *et al.*, 1980] allow for the construction of particles whose shape, size, and orientation can be controlled and accurately measured. However, it is laborious to take enough measurements to simulate the ensemble of particle shapes and sizes with random orientation that occurs naturally. Another approach is to work at visible wavelengths and with a large number of particles which fall through a beam. That method was used by several groups [Perry *et al.*, 1978; Jaggard *et al.*, 1981; Kuik *et al.*, 1991] and is the method used here. These data form the basis for our current understanding of the first-order differences between scattering by spheres and nonspheres. In this paper we want to address in more detail the differences in scattering phase function and linear polarization among the different nonsphere particle types and to evaluate, if possible, how well the Mishchenko *et al.* [this issue] calculation for spheroids is able to predict particle optical properties for a variety of particle types.

Measurement Strategy

We made use of a light scattering chamber at the University of Arizona originally designed to measure the scattering phase function and linear polarization of ammonia ice crystals [Pope

et al., 1992]. As shown in Figure 1, filtered light from a tungsten lamp is brought into a circular inner chamber, where it interacts with particles introduced into the chamber. Six optical systems spaced around a larger circular housing focused the scattered light onto 35-element Hamamatsu silicon photodiode linear array detectors. Some of the detectors sample light near the forward-scatter direction where specular reflection or diffraction from the light baffle dominates the signal and so cannot be used. Mechanical limitations prevent sampling closer than 10° from direct backscattering. We found that the useful range in scattering angle sampled by the instrument to be 15° – 170° . Each photodiode element samples about 2° of angle.

Measurements are taken in time sequence as a rotating filter wheel, located between the source lamp and the inner chamber, moves each filter/polarizer element through the beam. The filter wheel holds six elements (three filters times two polarizers). Filter characteristics are listed in Table 1. A polaroid sheet attached to each filter passes light polarized either parallel or perpendicular to the scattering plane. In that way, each detector can sequentially sample scattered light whose initial state was linearly polarized in one of two orthogonal directions. The intensity and linear polarization of the scattered radiation can then be obtained by summing and differencing measurements corresponding to the two polarization states of the incident beam. More details about the derivation of intensity and polarization and about the equipment and

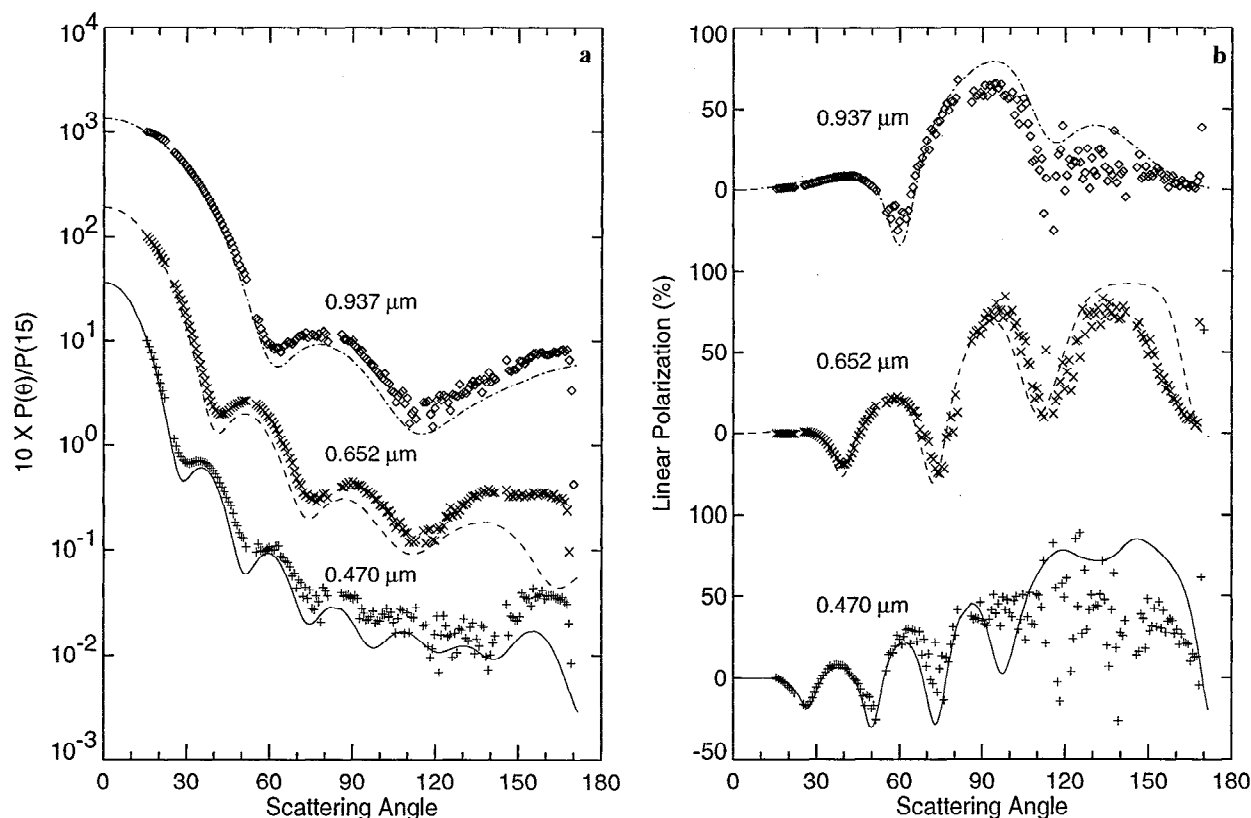


Figure 3. Measurements and Mie theory calculations for spheres with radius $0.4565 \mu\text{m}$ at three wavelengths. Shown are (a) the phase function, relative to its value at scattering angle 15° , and (b) linear polarization. Values for $0.652 \mu\text{m}$ were multiplied by 10, and values for $0.937 \mu\text{m}$ were multiplied by 100 to separate the curves.

calibration are given by Pope [1991] and Pope *et al.* [1992]. The optical layout of our system was essentially identical to that used by Pope *et al.*, but we removed the cloud condensation module and replaced it with a chamber to hold mineral dust samples.

Latex spheres of known size immersed in water were used to calibrate the relative response of the detectors and to assess the system noise, dynamic range, and ability to measure the phase function and linear polarization. Polystyrene latex spheres were procured from Duke Scientific Corporation. Three samples were obtained, having radii 0.0625 , 0.16 , and $0.4565 \mu\text{m}$. We used the smallest spheres to calibrate the relative response of the detectors, since the signal in the back-scattering directions for the larger spheres was low. We used measurements of the other sizes to assess the system performance. A comparison between measurements and Mie theory calculations is shown in Figures 2 and 3.

The locations, signs, and magnitudes of the features (relative minima and maxima) predicted by Mie theory are present in the observations, although the polarization signal is noisy for the largest spheres at scattering angles greater than 90° . The sensitivity in the blue channel is significantly less than for the other wavelengths, and so the signal/noise ratio is lowest for blue. There are systematic differences between theory and observation. The most likely cause for these differences is multiply scattered light both within the cloud of particles, and from light scattered onto the walls of the chamber and then into the detectors.

We minimized multiple scattering by diluting the concentra-

tion of spheres such that the extinction optical depth along the entire length of the inner chamber was no more than 0.01 . Calculations were not done to estimate the magnitude of the multiply scattered light, although they could be. We also removed, as much as possible, the effects of radiation scattered from the structure by first measuring the light incident on the detectors before the particles were introduced and subtracting this background from the particle measurements.

The effects of multiple scattering are largest when the signal is smallest, which occurs where the phase function is relatively small (scattering angles 70° – 170°) for blue and red for $0.16\text{-}\mu\text{m}$ spheres and at all wavelengths for the larger sphere. Mie theory predicts that at scattering angles between 90° and 170° the phase function for the largest spheres is only about 10^{-3} of its

Table 2. Mineral Dust Samples From Duke Scientific Corp.

Particle Composition	Size Range, μm
Aluminum oxide	0.3–10
Aluminum silicate	0.2–6
Antimony oxide	0.2–3
Calcium carbonate	0.1–8
Cerium oxide	0.5–6
Silicon carbide	0.7–7

Size range values were provided by Duke Scientific Corp. We assume these give lower and upper bounds on equivalent-sphere radius for individual particles in the sample, but the definition of this parameter was not supplied by the vendor.

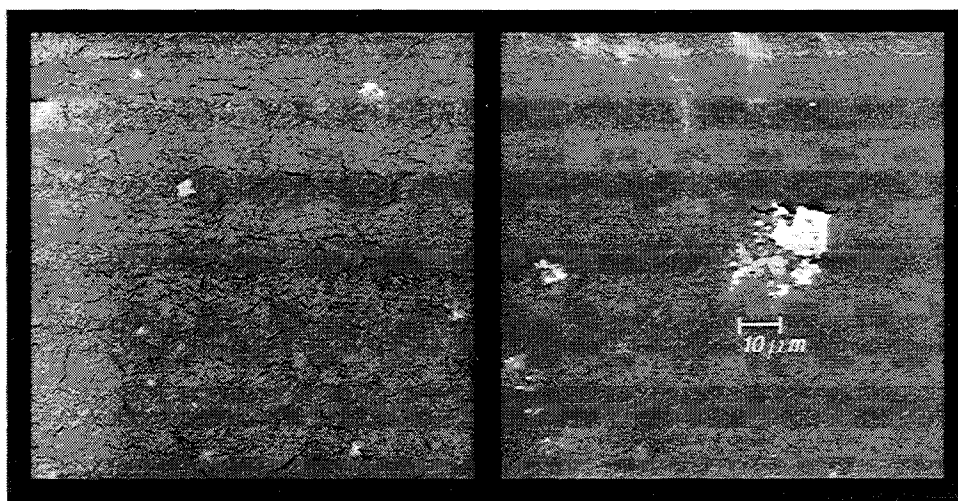


Figure 4. (left) Scanning electron micrograph image of a few silicon carbide particles. (right) Sample of aluminum oxide particles. These particles settled out of the optical chamber onto the micrograph substrate and contributed to the scattered light shown in Figures 7 and 12.

value at 15° . In order to have enough signal to measure the scattering at these angles there needs to be a significant number of particles in the beam, which leads to multiple scattering. Multiple scattering at some wavelengths and at some angles can be several times larger than single scattering. The signal in the forward-scattering hemisphere is dominated by single scattering. We have not tried to account for the systematic difference due to multiple scattering. We have also not tried to account for the anomalous behavior seen in the blue and red channels in Figure 2b at the lowest and highest scattering

angles. These points must be kept in mind when examining the data on mineral dust particles.

Measurements of Mineral Dust Particles

We procured mineral dust samples from Duke Scientific Corporation. Samples were chosen to be representative, as far as possible, of the size range of particles which contribute most to scattering in the terrestrial atmosphere (a few tenths of a micron to several microns). We selected almost all the samples (a total of six) in the catalog satisfying that criterion. Particles in the Duke Scientific catalog were characterized by chemical composition and by a range in particle size, but there was no information on mineralogy, shape, or size distribution. The six particle types are listed in Table 2 and include aluminum oxide, calcium carbonate, aluminum silicate, antimony oxide, cerium

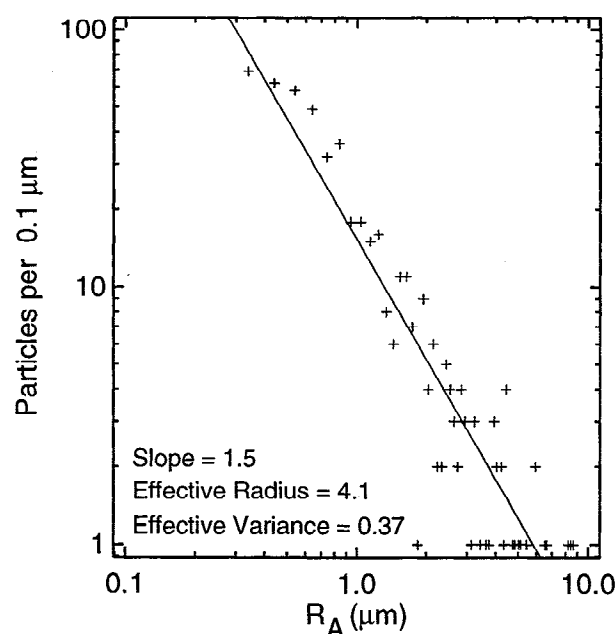


Figure 5. Size distribution $n(r)$ for aluminum oxide particles measured from scanning electron micrograph images. The parameter R_A is the radius defined by $A = \pi R_A^2$, where A is the area projected onto the plane of the image (the measured area). The distribution was fit to a power law (solid line) whose slope is indicated. The effective radius (μm) is the area-weighted mean radius, $R_{\text{eff}} = \frac{\sum n(R_A) R_A \pi R_A^2}{\sum n(R_A) \pi R_A^2}$. The effective variance is $v_{\text{eff}} = \frac{\sum n(R_A) (R_A - R_{\text{eff}})^2 \pi R_A^2}{R_{\text{eff}}^2 \sum n(R_A) \pi R_A^2}$.

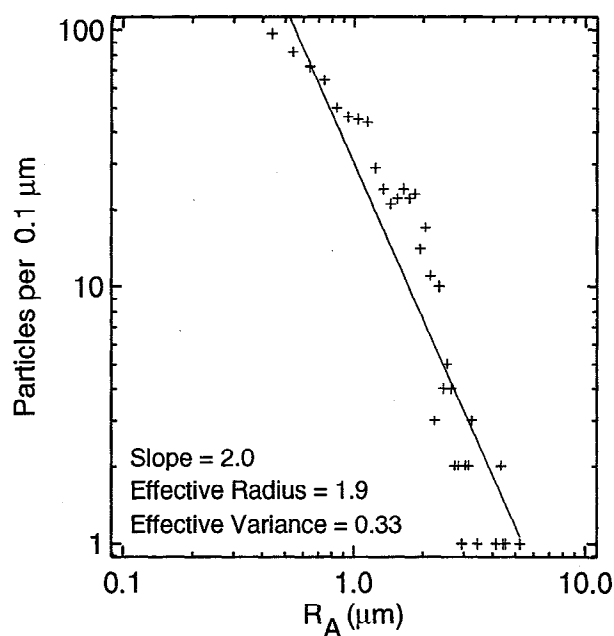


Figure 6. Size distribution for silicon carbide particles.

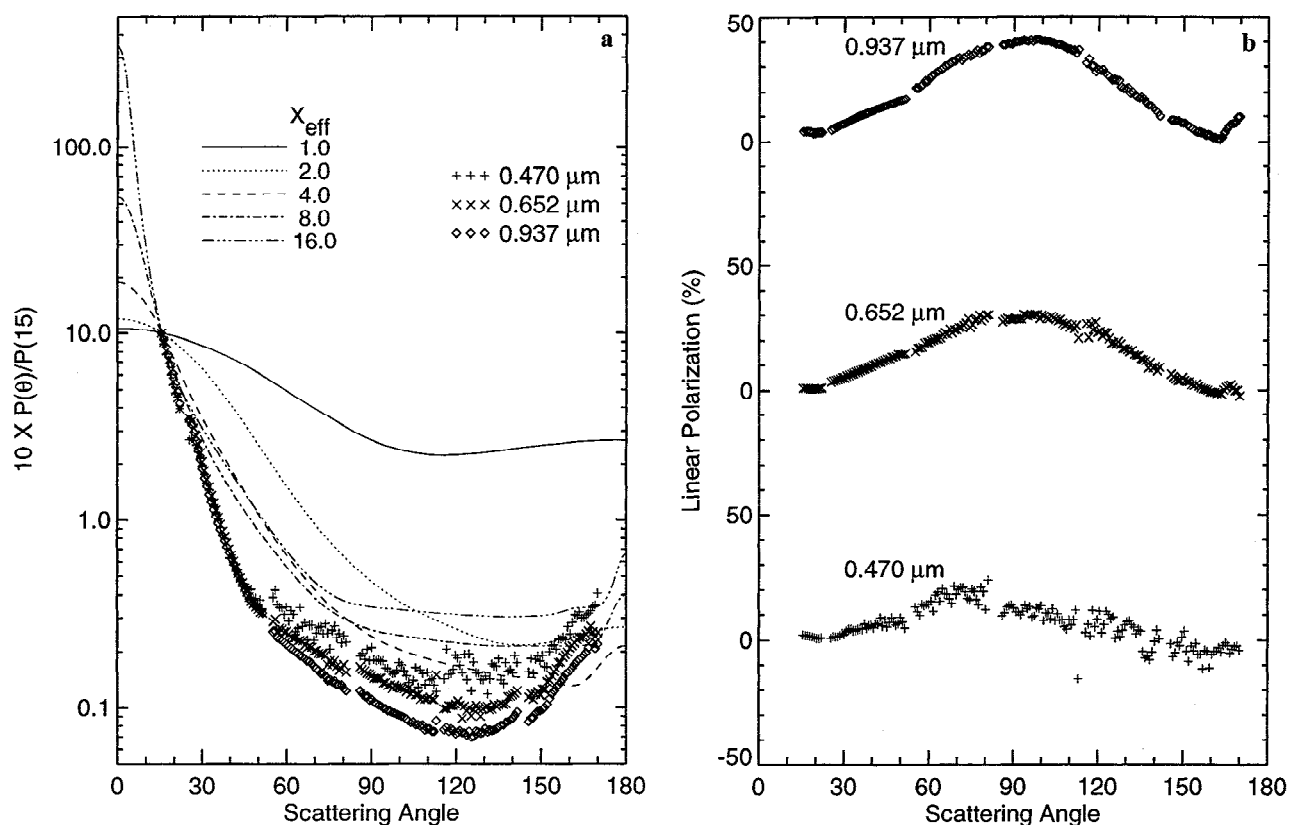


Figure 7. (a) Phase functions and (b) linear polarization for aluminum oxide particles. In this and subsequent figures the phase function is normalized to its value at scattering angle 15° . Measurements at three wavelengths are plotted as plus signs, crosses, and diamond symbols. Phase function calculations for spheroids (see text) are shown for various values of the effective size parameter (X_{eff} is the cross-section-weighted size parameter).

oxide, and silicon carbide. None of these is common in the atmosphere, but they provide a variety of shapes, size distributions, and refractive indices to help us test and improve our ideas about scattering by small mineral particles. We were able to estimate size distributions from scanning electron micrograph images of the deposit collected when the particles settled out of the chamber. Two representative images are shown in Figure 4.

Silicon carbide particles in the electron micrograph images appear as well-isolated angular grains, whereas aluminum oxide particles are often clustered and their morphology suggests that particles are sometimes clumped. Size-frequency histograms were compiled from about 50 images for each particle type and are shown in Figures 5 and 6 for aluminum oxide and silicon carbide. Small particles (radius less than $0.3 \mu\text{m}$) are not well resolved. The size distribution is uncertain at effective radius larger than about $2 \mu\text{m}$ because the number of large particles was small. We define the effective radius of a size distribution as the area-weighted average radius. Its value is 4.1 and $1.9 \mu\text{m}$ for aluminum oxide and silicon carbide, respectively.

Results of the light-scattering experiments are shown in Figures 7–12. Table 3 summarizes the salient features for each of the particle types. Statistical uncertainty can be judged by the scatter in the plotted points. Systematic errors can be judged by the trends and offsets of blocks of contiguous points which belong to each of the six linear array detectors, seen most readily in Figure 12b. These offsets are possibly caused by drift

in the gains of the each of the six array output amplifiers between the time of the measurement and the time the array was last calibrated. As noted earlier, there may be an additional systematic effect due to multiple scattering which works to decrease the amplitude of the polarization and increase the apparent phase function at scattering angles greater than 90° where the scattering amplitude is small. We have not attempted to remove these offsets.

One of the goals of this study is to assess how well phase functions for mineral dust particles can be represented by calculations for spheroids [Mishchenko *et al.*, this issue]. The best way to do that would be to calculate the phase functions for the appropriate refractive index and size distribution of the measured particles. Unfortunately, we could find no information on the refractive index of four of the samples. Refractive indices for aluminum oxide and silicon carbide are listed in Table 1. The Mishchenko *et al.* calculations were done for refractive index $1.53 + 0.008i$, which is similar to that for aluminum oxide. The real part of the refractive index of silicon carbide is much higher.

Another factor which frustrated our attempt to compare measurement to theory is the presence of particles larger than the largest computed by Mishchenko *et al.* [this issue]. The effective size parameter is defined by $X_{\text{eff}} = 2\pi r_{\text{eff}}/\lambda$, where λ is the wavelength. We are careful to distinguish in the remainder of this paper between effective size parameter for a size distribution, and size parameters of individual particles in the distribution. Individual particles in our measurement set have

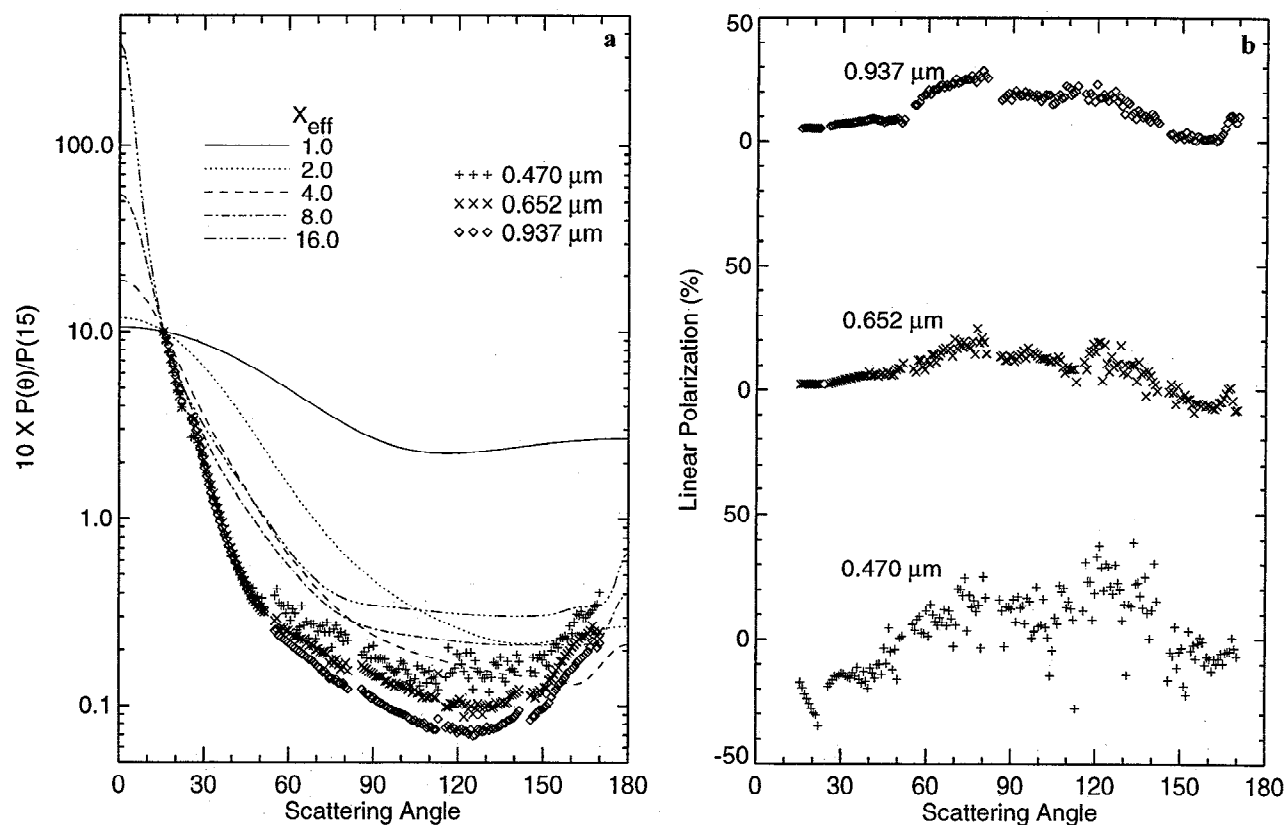


Figure 8. (a) Phase functions and (b) linear polarization for aluminum silicate particles.

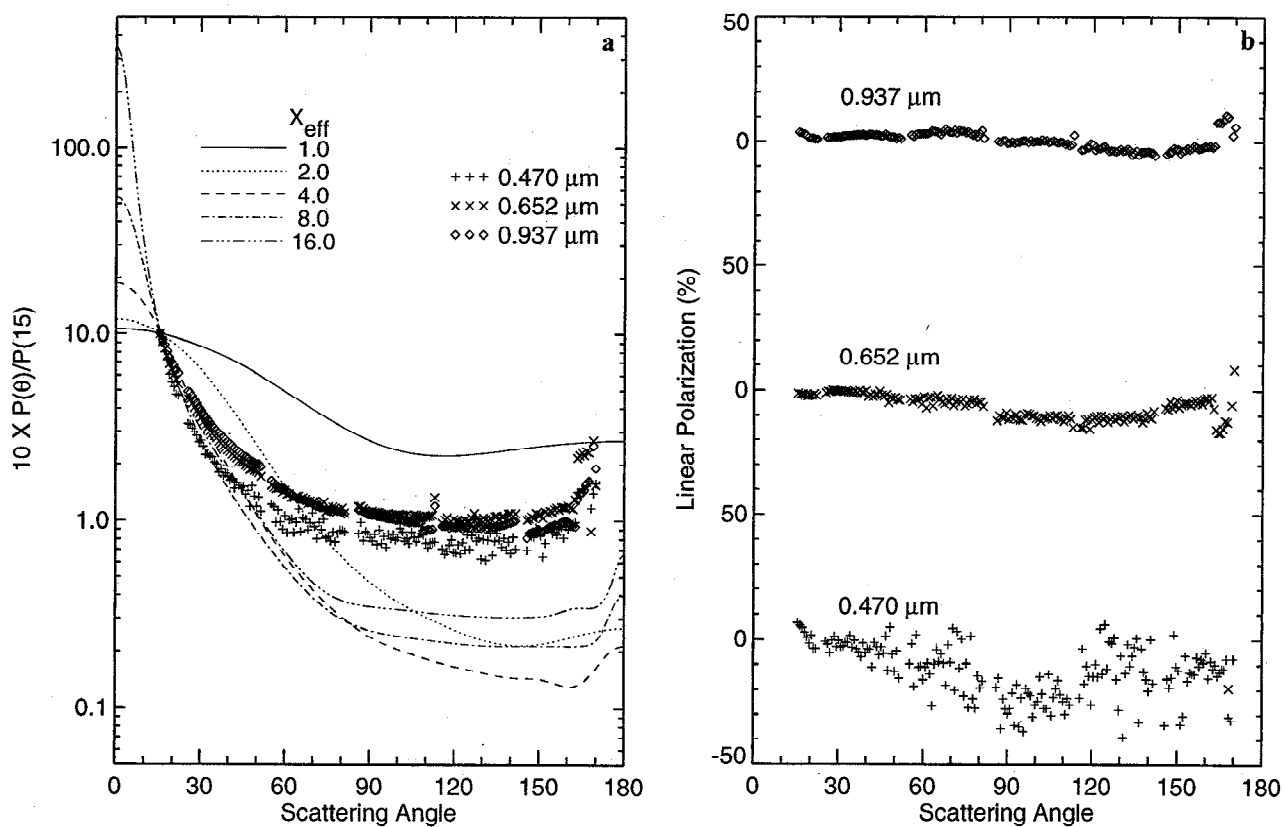


Figure 9. (a) Phase functions and (b) linear polarization for antimony oxide.

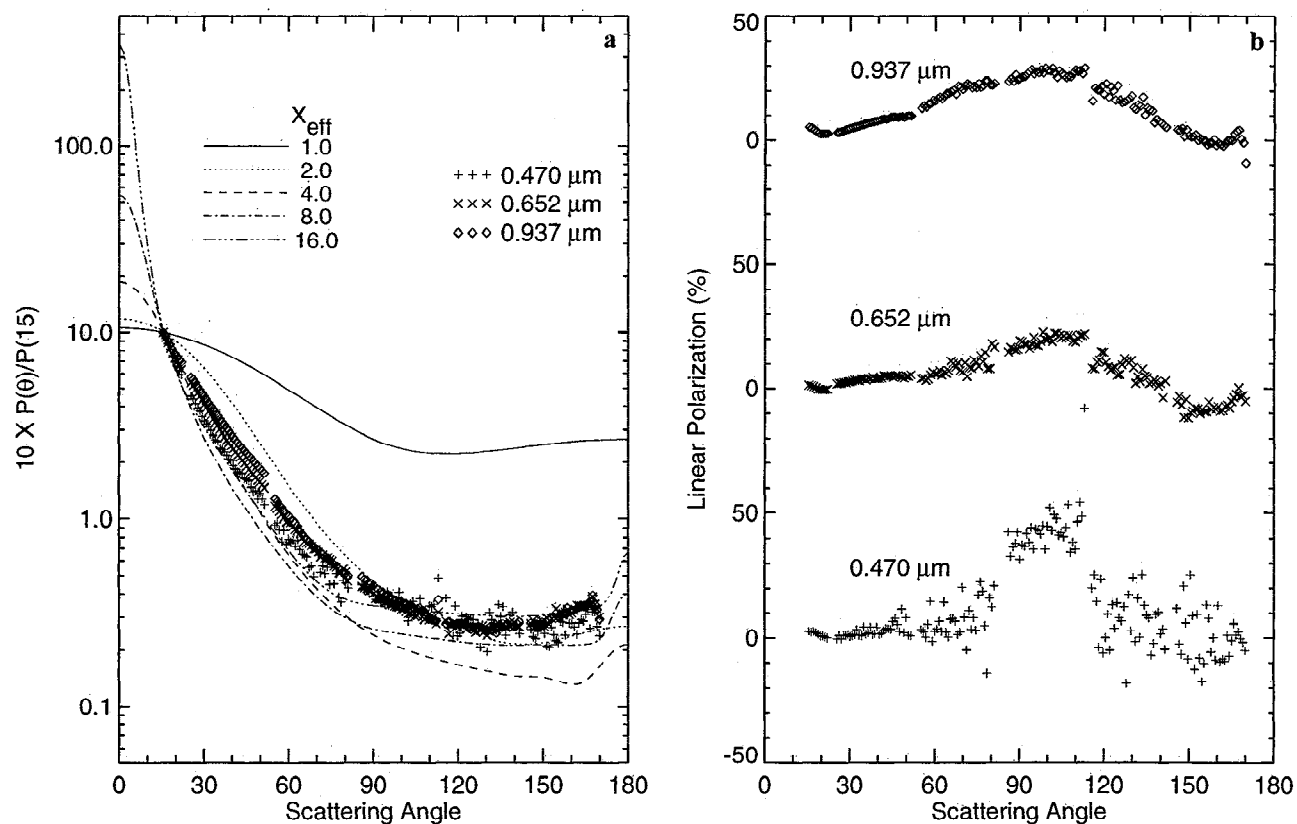


Figure 10. (a) Phase functions and (b) linear polarization for calcium carbonate particles.

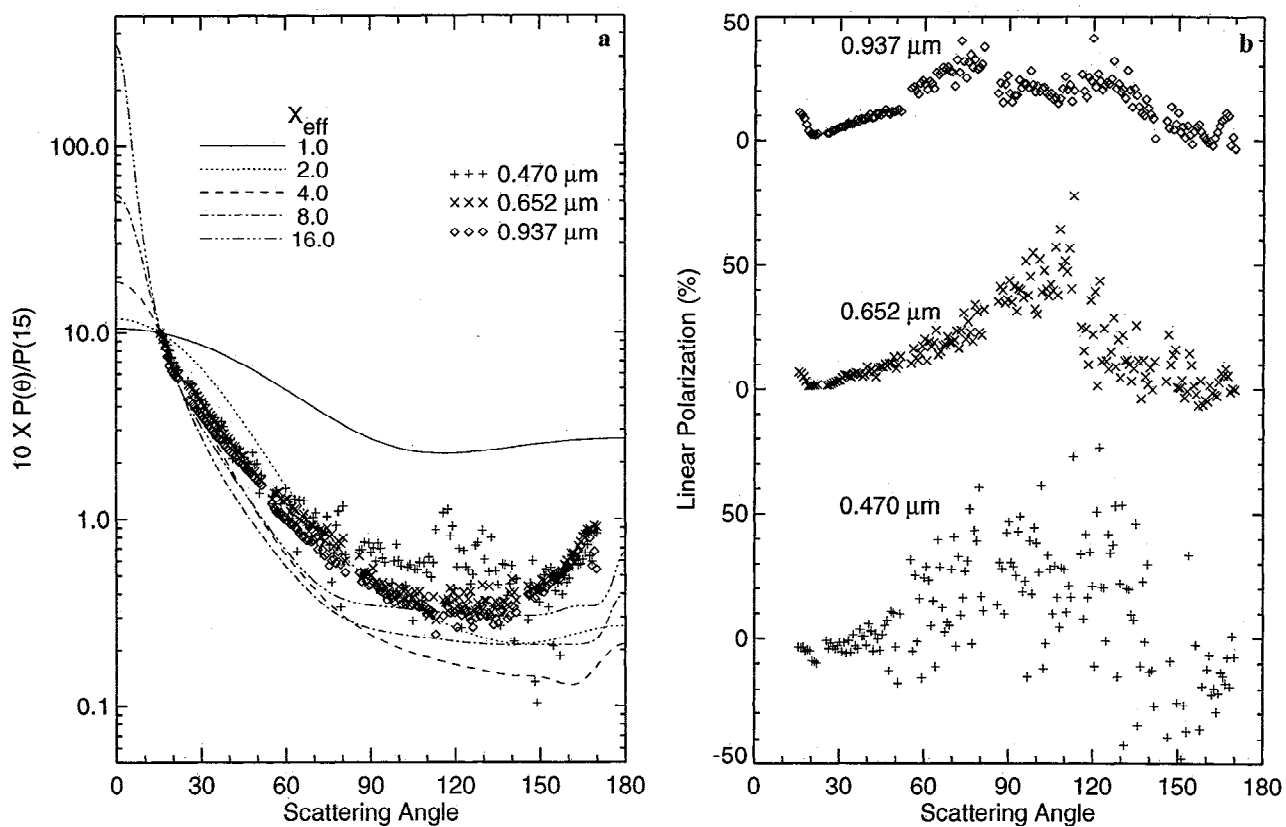


Figure 11. (a) Phase functions and (b) linear polarization for cerium oxide particles.

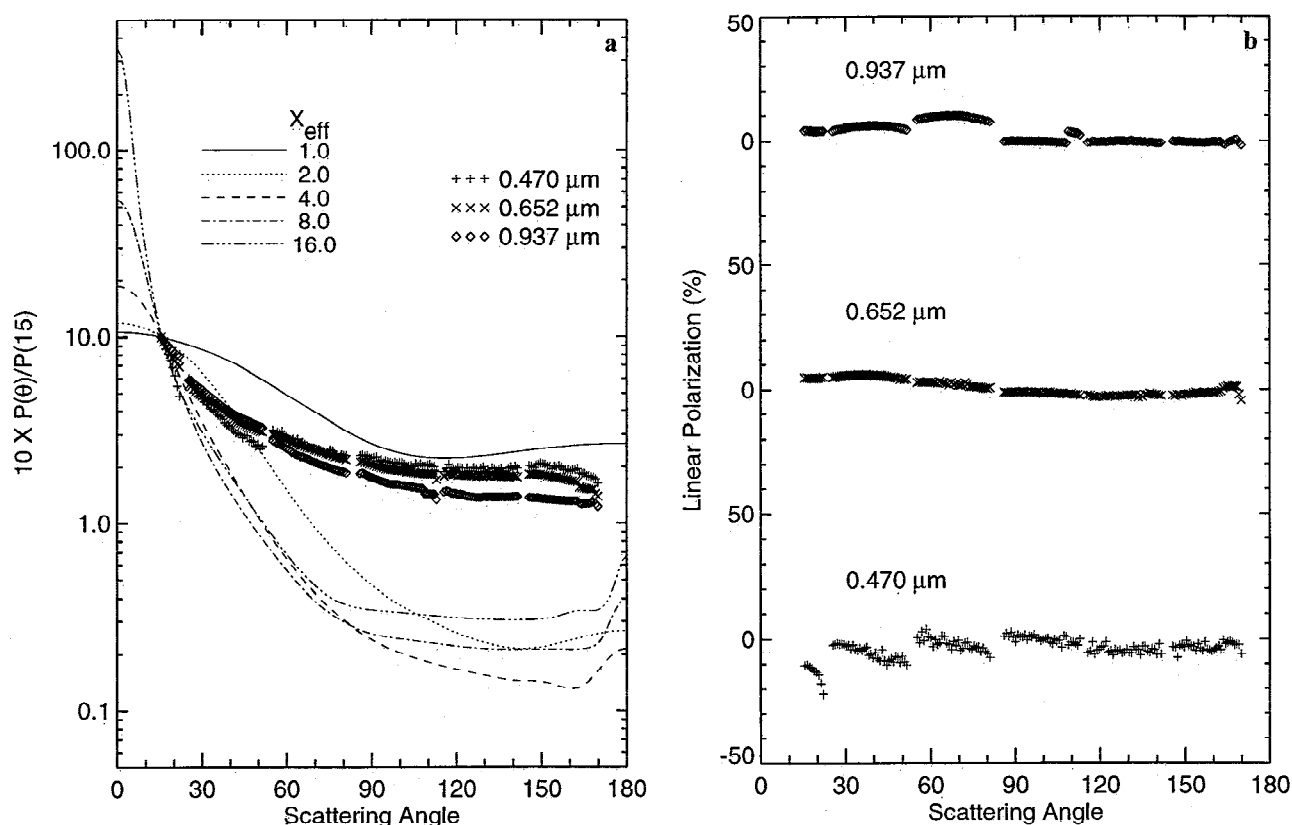


Figure 12. (a) Phase functions and (b) linear polarization for silicon carbide particles.

equivalent-sphere radius (R_A) as large as 10 μm , corresponding to $X = 134$ at $\lambda = 0.47 \mu\text{m}$ and $X = 67$ at $0.937 \mu\text{m}$. Particle effective radius was as large as 4.1 μm , corresponding to $X_{\text{eff}} = 54$ at $\lambda = 0.47 \mu\text{m}$ and $X_{\text{eff}} = 27$ at $0.937 \mu\text{m}$. The largest equivalent-sphere particle radius which went into the size-averaged results by *Mishchenko et al.* [this issue] had $X = 50$, whereas the largest effective size parameter in the *Mishchenko et al.* table is $X_{\text{eff}} = 25$. In spite of these deficiencies (which are not very great at $0.937 \mu\text{m}$), we believe it is instructive to compare the data with spheroid phase functions for a variety of size parameters. Calculations for spheroids from *Mishchenko et al.* are shown in Figures 7–12 for X_{eff} ranging from 1 to 16 in factor of 2 steps.

As particle size parameter increases from 1 to 4, the phase function (normalized to its value at 15°) drops by more than an order of magnitude at scattering angle 150° , and then increases as X_{eff} increases. There is very little change in the shape of the phase function in the scattering angle range 15° – 170° as X_{eff} increases from 16 to 25. The phase function for aluminum oxide particles shown in Figure 7 should be judged against this asymptotic behavior, since the effective radius of the particles is 4.1 μm , making X_{eff} larger than the largest value plotted. The spheroid phase function for $X_{\text{eff}} = 16$ is in good agreement with the measured phase function at $0.937 \mu\text{m}$, although the spheroid curve is a little flatter than the measured points in the scattering angle range 90° – 170° . Phase functions for the other two wavelengths do not drop as much at scattering angles greater than 45° . Some of the difference may be attributable to the small difference in refractive index between the measured particles and the theoretical results, and some may be due to multiple scattering or particle microstructure. It is noteworthy

that sodium chloride particles measured by *Perry et al.* [1978] have real refractive index close to that for aluminum oxide, and have similar phase functions, even though the shape of the salt particles (rough cubes) is not similar to that for the aluminum oxide sample. Phase functions for spheroids are also close to those for calcium carbonate, although again, the spheroid curves are a little flatter than the measurements between 90° and 170° .

Phase functions for the other four samples differ substantially from those for the two discussed above and those for the spheroids calculated by *Mishchenko et al.* [this issue]. Phase functions for cerium oxide particles (Figure 11a) have minima near scattering angle 125° which are similar to those for spheroids, but the spheroid phase functions have a different curvature over most of the scattering angle range. Phase functions for aluminum silicate particles (Figure 8a) have a steeper slope at scattering angles between 15° and 60° , and drop to lower values, with a stronger rise at scattering angles between 125° and 170° . Phase functions for antimony oxide (Figure 9a) and silicon carbide (Figure 12a) display the opposite behavior. Silicon carbide particles show no increase in scattering between scattering angles 150° and 170° . The effective radius for these particles is 1.9 μm , putting X_{eff} in the range 13–25. Spheroid phase functions for those sizes have relative phase functions which are about a factor of 10 smaller at large scattering angles. The difference might be attributable to the refractive index, which for silicon carbide, is significantly higher than that used in the calculation for spheroids. Another relevant difference might be in the microstructure of the particles. Silicon carbide particles appeared more angular than aluminum oxide

Table 3. Particle Scattering Summary

Particle Composition	Phase Function Distinguishing Feature	Linear Polarization Distinguishing Feature
Aluminum oxide	Similar to spheroids	Positive at red and IR with single maximum near 100°, weak negative branch (blue) at 160°
Calcium carbonate	Similar to spheroids	Mostly positive, with structure and a weak negative branch (red) at 160°
Cerium oxide	Similar to spheroids but showing more curvature	Positive, peak near 100° scattering angle
Aluminum silicate	Minimum deeper than for spheroids	Mostly positive with structure, some negative (blue and red)
Antimony oxide	Shallow phase functions	Mostly negative, especially at blue wavelength, weakly positive at IR and $\theta < 90^\circ$
Silicon carbide	Shallow phase functions	Weak; instrumental effects

Particles in this table were ordered with respect to how well the phase functions for spheroids were able to account for features seen in the phase function measurements. The first two samples both have phase functions which are similar to spheroids. The last two have much more shallow phase functions. Polarization for four of the samples reached peak values near 40% near scattering angle 100°. The last two samples in the table showed much weaker or negative polarization over a large range of scattering angles. Effects caused by some combination of multiple scattering and/or drift in the detector sensitivity dominated the polarization signature for the silicon carbide sample.

particles, although the resolution of the images makes this hard to judge.

Most of the samples we studied produce positively polarized light at most scattering angles. The statistical uncertainties and systematic offsets mentioned earlier prevent us from drawing conclusions about possible polarization features whose angular scale is less than about 20°. Aluminum oxide and cerium oxide (Figures 7 and 11) have similar polarization properties. At 0.652 and 0.937 μm the linear polarization has a single peak near 100° scattering angle, which reaches 30% and 40% in the two channels, respectively, for aluminum oxide. The polarization at 0.47 μm for aluminum oxide has a peak near scattering angle 70° and may have a weak negative branch near 160°. Polarization curves for aluminum silicate and calcium carbonate (Figures 8 and 10) at red and infrared wavelengths are also generally positive, but the shape of the curves is more complex. The polarization at the blue wavelength for those particles has not been reliably measured. Antimony oxide and silicon carbide produce little polarization compared to the other samples (Figures 9 and 12). Polarization is mostly negative for the antimony oxide sample, except for the 0.937- μm channel at scattering angles less than 90°. Both these samples have phase functions that are shallow compared to the spheroid calculations. Perhaps the shallow phase functions and low polarization values are due to a large real refractive index or are related to particle microstructure. Sodium chloride particles with size parameter near 10 have low polarization [Perry *et al.*,

1978], but their phase functions resemble those for aluminum oxide, which has a similar refractive index.

We do not have calculations for linear polarization of spheroids with the size range, distribution of aspect ratios, and refractive index we used for the phase function comparisons. *Mishchenko and Travis* [1994b] showed linear polarization for spheroids with similar refractive indices and effective size parameter up to 15. For effective size parameter between 10 and 15 and for refractive index $1.6 + 0.003i$, prolate spheroids with aspect ratio 2 have a narrow positive branch between 90° and 120°, with negative polarization at other scattering angles. At the highest effective size parameter for which calculations are available ($X_{\text{eff}} = 15$), the magnitude of the negative polarization is quite small except near scattering angle 170°. Oblate spheroids have positive polarization over a much larger scattering angle range (0°–120°), with a negative branch near 130° and a second positive branch near 170°.

Conclusions

Atmospheric radiation models and remote sensing studies of atmospheric aerosols which rely on scattered light intensity or polarization need to employ a numerical method to calculate the phase function and linear polarization of mineral dust particles because laboratory measurements are not available at some scattering angles and for a wide variety of sizes, shapes, and compositions. Calculations based on randomly oriented spheroids with a distribution of aspect ratios have been proposed. Calculations for size distributions with effective size parameter as large as 25 are now possible [Mishchenko *et al.*, this issue]. They offer advantages over semiempirical methods [e.g., Pollack and Cuzzi, 1980] because they do not make approximations which violate the physics of electromagnetic wave propagation. They cannot offer a completely satisfactory framework for all nonspherical particle scattering because they are not able to reproduce features such as the halo sometimes observed for cirrus clouds. However, do they sufficiently capture the optical character of mineral dust particles found in natural settings?

Among the six particle types we studied, only two have known refractive index, and of these, only aluminum oxide has a refractive index which is similar to that for the spheroid calculations. Although the aluminum oxide sample contains particles larger than the maximum spheroid size with which they were compared, the asymptotic behavior of spheroid phase functions at X_{eff} larger than 15, in the scattering angle range 15°–170° suggests that our comparison with spheroids in that size range has validity. Although there are some differences between the shape of the phase function for aluminum oxide and the phase functions calculated for spheroids, these differences are within the range of uncertainty in our measurements, and are much smaller than differences between measurements and calculations for equal-area or equal-volume spheres [Wiscombe and Mugnai, 1988; Mishchenko *et al.*, 1995].

Phase functions for two samples are much more shallow than those for the other samples, and much more shallow than could be accounted for by the spheroid calculations. One sample (aluminum silicate) produced phase functions with deeper minima than found among the spheroid calculations. The shallow phase function for silicon carbide might be due to its high real refractive index. This idea can be tested with additional calculations for spheroids. Another possibility is that particle microstructure is responsible for this behavior. We were un-

able to compare the polarization measurements we presented with calculations at the appropriate size range and refractive index. We hope the measurements presented here will stimulate further development and testing of numerical codes for the computation of scattering by nonspherical particles.

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- L. R. Doose, A. M. Eibl, and M. G. Tomasko, Lunar and Planetary Laboratory, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721.
- M. I. Mishchenko, NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, 2880 Broadway, New York, NY 10025.
- R. A. West, MS 169-237, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, 4800 Oak Grove Drive, Pasadena, CA 91109. (e-mail: raw@west.jpl.nasa.gov)

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